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EXHIBIT  
DATE Jan 27, 09  
HB 2

January 24, 2009

Dear Legislative Sub-Committee,

In light of these uncertain economic times, I'm not going to ask you for a raise this year. I would like to begin by thanking you for funding the Healthcare for Healthcare Workers initiative. What a huge difference it must make in a person's life to have health insurance. It truly was the right thing to do. I have worked as a Hab Trainer through the Medicaid Waiver program for many years now in Missoula. I think we have a relatively successful model in place but as with anything on the leading edge, there is room for improvement. In the interest of brevity, I will limit myself to just three.

- Expand the definition of "Direct Care Worker" to include Hab Trainers, respite care, and homemakers.  
*Caregiver wage increases and benefits have not always included other Direct Care Worker categories such as Hab Trainer, Respite, or Homemaker.*
- Make the Healthcare for Healthcare Workers Initiative permanent.  
*It's the right thing to do. The stability of the workforce should not be undermined by the uncertainty of their healthcare.*
- Factor in an annual cost of living adjustment tagged to provider rate increases and caregiver wages.  
*Every session you listen to the same requests for more funding, i.e. provider rate increases, caregiver wage increases, and probably many others familiar to you. The time spent duplicating efforts may be better spent refining and developing our progress as we lead the way in this rapidly growing industry.*

Thank you for your time and your service.

Yours truly,

*Diana Mitchell*

Diana Mitchell  
Lolo, MT